

this group and help develop future leaders and innovative thinkers of tomorrow.

To the families who have opened their hearts and homes to these children we celebrate you and your efforts to change the lives of these children. As the rest of us enjoy and share the company of our children and extended family members, let us not forget those children who will not have the same opportunity to do the same. Let us not forget the children who will not be able to celebrate the holiday season in a warm, loving, and happy home they can call their own. Let us remember these children and work towards positively affecting these children's lives and securing their success in the future.

THE NEED TO PROTECT PROGRAMS FOR SENIORS

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. ROSS of Arkansas. Mr. Speaker, earlier this summer, Congress passed a bipartisan, compromise agreement—known as the Budget Control Act of 2011—to raise the debt ceiling in two stages by 2013. The new law cuts spending by more than it increases the debt limit and it does not raise any taxes.

Specifically, the Budget Control Act will reduce the deficit by more than \$2 trillion over the next 10 years. To do so, it directly specifies \$917 billion in deficit cuts now and requires at least an additional \$1.2 trillion in savings by December 23, 2011. Tasked with finding these deficit cuts is the 12-member, bipartisan and bicameral Joint Committee on Deficit Reduction, also known as the “Super Committee.”

According to the new law, the Super Committee must recommend a plan to Congress by November 23, 2011, that cuts the deficit by at least \$1.2 trillion in ten years. Then, Congress has until December 23, 2011, to pass the plan on a straight up-or-down vote, meaning no amendments and no filibusters allowed. If Congress fails to pass the plan or comes up short, then across-the-board spending cuts would automatically take effect, split evenly among defense and non-defense spending.

As we are approaching the November 23 deadline, I continue to believe that we need to make serious changes to our budget that will provide necessary savings to help stabilize our long-term financial security. However, any changes that take place over the long run must not be at the expense of our seniors. We absolutely cannot reduce the deficit by cutting seniors' benefits or jeopardizing the stability of programs that they rely on. This is not what I want and this is not what the American people want.

Over 20 million Americans aged 60 and older are economically insecure—living at or below 250 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL). The FPL does not account for the rising cost of living seniors experience as they age, which can include illness, loss of a spouse, or care for a disabled spouse, adult dependent child, or grandchildren.

Many seniors rely on fixed incomes, receiving on average \$1,081 in Social Security benefits, \$401.70 in Supplemental Security Income, and/or \$297 in public assistance each

month. Women fare worse than men, with 56% economically disadvantaged compared to 30% of men. Weekly earnings vary by age and gender. Men aged 55 and older have the highest average weekly earnings at \$965, while women earn \$744.

In August 2011, 1.7 million Americans aged 55 and older were actively seeking work. The unemployment rate for mature workers in this age group is 6.6 percent. The average duration of looking for employment is 44.6 weeks.

These are only a few statistics highlighting the economic difficulties many of our nation's elders face.

I believe that reducing the federal budget deficit is important to our nation's economic future and will require difficult choices and shared sacrifice. However, spending cuts cannot be made at the expense of economically disadvantaged seniors. Due to the recent economic downturn, more seniors than ever need assistance and support to make ends meet.

The Super Committee and Congress must be mindful of this as any possible changes are made to senior related programs and benefits.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT FROM NOVEMBER 18TH

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, today the House, as required by the Budget Control Act, voted on a Balanced Budget Amendment (BBA) to the Constitution. It is disheartening that we could not get the required two-thirds votes needed to pass the BBA. With the National Debt topping \$15 Trillion this week and our country continues to reel from the effects of irresponsible government spending, now more than ever, Congress needed to take bold action to permanently stanch the bleeding.”

Unfortunately, the BBA was dead on arrival in the House after President Obama announced his formal opposition to the legislation. Today's vote proves that Washington is not serious about solving our Nation's spending problem. Forty-nine out of fifty states have set an example for Washington by passing BBA's of their own. As Hoosier families continue to struggle to live within their means, the President and House Democrats clearly believe those same rules shouldn't apply to Big Government. Washington continues to borrow 40 cents of every dollar it spends, robbing Peter to pay Paul in a vain attempt to perpetuate the existence of the federal government's bloated bureaucracies. The system is broken and they simply refused to see the reason in this common sense measure. The President and his like minded cronies instead have chosen to reduce this debate to election year scare tactics by falsely claiming to seniors that the BBA will kill Social Security and Medicare all the while continuing to stoke the coals of their burgeoning class war, rather than work with their colleagues across the aisle to stave off out of control spending and get American's back to work. In defeating the balanced budget amendment they have made their priorities clear.

MILFORD HIGH SCHOOL STATE CHAMPION CROSS COUNTRY TEAM

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to acknowledge Michigan's Division 1 State Champion Cross Country team from Milford High School. On November 5, 2011 the Milford Mavericks outran the Hartland Eagles to claim the title, placing three runners among the state's top five finalists.

After a season that saw great success in both dual meets and invitationals, Milford won the West Division of the Lakes Conference in the Kensington Lakes Activities Association with a record of 5-0. The Eagles placed 2nd in the talent laden Lakes Conference meet behind Hartland. Moving on to the undeniably toughest MHSAA Regional, the Eagles' 55 point total topped conference rivals Hartland and Lakeland with 83 and 94, respectively.

Head Coach Brian Salyer's harriers were determined to take the state title as the starter's pistol sounded at Michigan International Speedway. The Kensington Lake Activities Association Lakes Conference placed an incredible four teams in the top five state finalists. Milford avenged the stinging conference loss to Hartland by legging out a 1st place finish of 128 over 2nd place Hartland's 172. Waterford Mott took 3rd with 177 and Lakeland finished 5th with 188.

Mr. Speaker, the 2011 Milford Mustangs deserve to be recognized for their determination, achievement and spirit, and I am very proud of their fortitude and effort. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Mavericks for obtaining this spectacular title and in honoring their devotion to our community and country.

ON THE OCCASION OF DANIEL BENTON'S RETIREMENT FROM THE BERKLEY CITY COUNCIL AFTER FIFTEEN YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. GARY C. PETERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2011

Mr. PETERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Daniel Benton for his fifteen years of leadership in the Berkley, Michigan community as a City Councilman.

A resident of Berkley since 1979, Dan has been an active member of the community, working to improve the lives of its residents. With his wife, Carol, he raised their three sons, all of whom attended Berkley Public Schools. Outside of his own family, Dan's values are evident in his support of local Park and Recreation programs like Hoops Basketball and Dad's Club Baseball, which promote athletic programs that help local youth make healthy life choices. And, as a dentist, Dan also operates his own practice within Berkley, providing area residents with important healthcare services.

One area of particular focus for Dan's activism has been the Berkley Public Library, which he has supported in many different capacities over the years. He served the library